

(15)

THE True Protestants A P P E A L TO THE City and Countrey.

Gentlemen, and worthy Fellow-Citizens and Subjects,

I Have overcome my self, for your sakes, in two difficulties, which, it may be, have hindered many an honest man from speaking necessary Truth; the one is Fear, the other, an expectation that some other Person, better able to discharge it, would have undertaken the Province. For the first, I considered, Why should any *Englishman* be afraid to make Use of his Native Liberty to speak the Truth, and discharge his Conscience, especially when so many busie men are become so bold, not only to whisper, but loudly to proclaim Disloyalty, and are not satisfied to curse the King in their Thoughts, in their Bed-chamber, but are advanced to the confidence to print and publish such Reflections upon his most Sacred Majesty and the Government, as now by Law established, as makes the Ears of Loyal Subjects tingle.

I confess, I waited with impatience, to see some bold and generous Pen endeavour to arrest the Torrent, and stem the Tide, but have still been defeated in my expectation; deterred, I suppose, from what is every true *Englishman*, and good Protestant's Duty, by a prevailing timorqueness, lest they should be branded with the infamous Names of Jesuit, Papist, or Popishly affected: I expect the same Fate, but yet Names, which are only the Scum and Foam of Arbitrary, and Popular Defamers, shall never fright me, nor ought to do any Person out of the Duty we owe to God, our King, and our Countrey. I perfectly hate and abhor all Popery, Superstition, and Innovation in the Church; and all that know me, who are not inconsiderable, either for number or Quality, know me to be a true Church of *England-Kings-Protestant*. I do no less detest and abhor all other Schismatical Practices and Persuasions, treacherous and Disloyal Doctrines and Actions of Commonwealth-Protestants, and all those, whether Papists or Schismatics, who, though they disclaim the odious Doctrine, yet agree in the horrid and abominable Fact of King-killing.

Let them, either, or both, look never so demurely upon the matter, and endeavour to wash their hands of it by accusing one another, this thing was not done in a corner, but in the face of the Sun, and then avowed by Dissenting-Protestants, both in the Publick Memoirs of their Usurpation, and in their private Prints; and the Innocent Blood of the Just, as well as their own Impenitent Hearts, are Witnesses that I am no false Accuser: and whatever good Opinion others may have of this Generation of men, I am not to dissemble, but tell them such Truths as may prick them to the Hearts, and wound them into true Repentance, and that they lye under a more heavy guilt than the very *Jews*; for the Apostle excuses them, in a great measure, of the guilt of Innocent Blood; *I know, Brethren, that ye did it ignorantly, for, had ye known the Lord of Life and Glory, ye would not have crucified him*; they would have had *Pilate* alter his Superscription, from, *This is the King of the Jews*, into, *That he said he was the King of the Jews*; But these Shameless and Unblushing men, slew their Natural Liege Lord with the impudent Formalities of pretended Justice, banished the Lawful Heir, and took possession of the Vineyard, till the Lord of the Husbandmen, with his own wonderful hand, brought him back again in Peace.

I hate all the silly Popish Arts of shamming Plots upon the Presbyterians, there is no need of it; the whole Nation is sensible of their Design by their Endeavours; we know the men, and

their Conversation. All honest men believe the Popish Plot, and have a Detestation, both against the Principles and Practices of Popery; and it would be more vigorously prosecuted, if Commonwealth Protestants did not endeavour so visibly to make a hand of it, to play their own game: and if it either suffers in its Reputation, or by Delays, we are obliged to Dissenters for it, who, by their malicious, seditious Behaviour, their elevated Hopes, insolent and opprobrious Language against the Church and Kings Protestants, have put it beyond dispute, that they are attempting to play the Old Game again; and, having got a real Popish Plot, resolve to make that do the same Feat, which before they did under the bare Pretence of one; viz. the Alteration and Ruine of the Government established both in Church and State.

Let them never think to put out our Eyes quite with the dust which they raise, and the prefaces of Loyalty which they make; their Predecessors did the very same, and, I think, were the better bred, and more mannerly of the two: but, if they mean as they say, why do they look so like the Ale-mumping Thistles, at abhorring the Traiterous Position of taking up Arms by his Authority against his Majesties Person. It is the Duty of every good Subject, to endeavour all he can to preserve the Life of his most Sacred Majesty, the true Protestant Religion and Government in Church and State, as it is by Law now established, against all Persons who shall attempt to take away the one, or alter and subvert the other; but not one Commonwealth Protestant that will agree to say or swear this, and if they neither can nor will do it, Judge all ye People, what Protestants, what Christians they are.

Truth needs no little Arts to support its Credit, it is Design that uses Paint and Varnish: We King and Church-Protestants say, we love both, and will sincerely endeavour, according to our often repeated Sacred Oaths, to support, maintain, and defend both the King and the Church; but the Commonwealth-Protestants, are as afraid to take these Oaths, as unwilling to keep them. Quakers will not swear at all. Independents, Presbyterians, Anabaptists, &c. are abhorers of the Oath of Supremacy, unless their Pope Interest gives them a Dispensation to get into an Office or Capacity to affront the Government; they say, they love the King, and the Protestant Religion, and the Church; but they equivocate as bad as Jesuits in the last, and, I fear, dissemble in the first.

Their Transactions indeed have of late been admirable and incomprehensible, in Defence of the Government and Protestant Religion; as for Instance,

First, The Government hath been aspersed, and in print too, and we know by what hands, with a Design to introduce Popery and Arbitrary Government, and, which is yet most incomprehensible, & damnable, most hellish, and execrable Plot is discovered, sworn, and believed, of the Papists, to take away the King's Life, and to subvert and alter the Government both in Church and State. Now, for my part, I believe the Popish Plot; but whosoever believes the other, whatever he pretends, cannot believe that, for they make admirable and incomprehensible Non-sense of it, that the Papists should be plotting to ruin their own Interest and Design, to subvert a Government that was endeavouring to bring in Popery.

Secondly, In order to the preservation and support of the Government, all Occurrences of State are and have been perverted, to defame the Government, and debauch the People from their Loyalty. A War is made with *Holland*, that was purposely to weaken the Protestant Interest; a Peace is concluded, and in defence of the *Netherlands* against *France*, the King appears in Arms; why, then that was a Popish Army, and designed to cut our Throats; the Army is disbanded, and the *Presbyterian Whiggs* in *Scotland* rebell. Alas, poor Souls! they are jugled into it by the Oppressions of the Government, and the Instigations of the Papists. But *Tangier* was the prettiest Ball; to day *Tangier* is ready to be lost, and then 'tis worth the Lord knows what, the *Evant Trade* is ruined and lost: the next Post *Tangier* is relieved, and the *Alcaide* routed; why then 'tis not worth the thinking on, 'tis a Question whether it has done us more good or hurt; another while, *Tangier* is sold to the *French King* for no body knows how many hundred thousand pounds. It were endless to recount all that might be said upon this Head: I will add but one Instance more, to shew what Arts have been used to defame the Government, not sparing the very Person of his Majesty, whom God preserve. You might, within these three Months, have had what odds you would, that the Popish Lords would never be brought to Tryal at all; when time proved that a Lye, then, ten to one, *Stafford* should not dye, and the very Warrant for his Execution, was reported to be a Pardon; well, that would not do: then he would not be *Colemaniz'd* with the black Box, but would tell Tales before he lost his Head, and much was expected at his going down to the Lords House, and not that he should talk of a Toleration as an Expedient to bring in Popery: and after all these Lyes and Forgeries, proved to be such in the face of the World, yet the trade goes on; and every little mote in the Eye of the Government, is represented to the People to be a Beam.

Thirdly, All Arts are used to stigmatize the truly Loyal King and Church-Protestants with names of Infamy, Masqueraders, Church-Papists, Pensioners, Tories, and what not? to prevent

vent their being chosen by the People where they have Voices, and to incapacitate them for places of Trust in the Government, as a most admirable and effectual way to support it; nay a most incomprehensible Indictment was either intended to be, or was presented by a Loyal Grand-Jury, against the Kings Guards, in order to the Preservation of his Majesties person in these times of eminent Danger; and when one of the lying Mercuries of the Tribe, had just printed the News, that 12000 *French* were ready to be landed in the Dominions of his Majesty of *Great Britain*, a seasonable time to disarm him, that so the *French* or the *Papists* may have the greater Freedom to do their Business. Oh admirable and incomprehensible Loyalty of Common-wealth Protestants!

Fourthly, All the Industry imaginable, is used to represent such persons to be the fittest Representatives of the People, who have been in actual Arms against his Majesty, and his Royal Father: nay, as it is credibly reported, one was recommended to a neighbouring Burrough, who was not only of the Council of State, and had abjur'd *Charles Stuart*, as the breeding of those Loyal Protestants, then called the King, but had said beyond Sea, at the time of the Tragical Murder of the late King, that rather than there should want an Executioner, he would come over, and do the Office; and I think, it was never certainly known who did it: however, the kind offer is an admirable and incomprehensible Qualification for a Preserver of his Majesties Life, and the Government now by Law established.

Fifthly, The People are continually kept waking with repeated Alarms, both by Printing and Coffee-house discourses; nothing is sounded in their Ears but frightful stories of Dangers, Massacres, Invasions, strange Sights in the Air, Apparitions and Visions; and though they have been cheated a thousand times over with the same things, yet they are so weak, to give Credit to the Reports and confident Reporters, who tell and print the most silly Stories, with the same Forehead that others do the most important Truths; and all this, to prepare the people to expect some dreadful Revolutions, which must by a certain Fatality befall the State.

Sixthly, That which is admirable and incomprehensible even to the most surprizing Astonishment, is to see *Pilate* and *Hind* made Friends, Presbyterians, Quakers, Independents and Anabaptists, who hate each other with a mortal irreconcilable Hatred, united as one man throughout *England*, to bring in, if possible, into the next House of Commons, Persons that may secure his Majesties Person, the Government, and the Protestant Religion. But if they settle that which is now by Law established, as I hope, if they settle any, they will, and secure the Church against Papists, Hereticks, and Schismatics, the great Enemies both of Church and State, they will strangely disappoint all those Peoples Expectations.

Now, that you may unlock all these Mysteries, I will lend you a Key; it is part of a Speech spoken by a late Lord Chancellor, to the Parliament.

My Lords and Gentlemen, let it not be said, I beseech you, of us, what was said of the Senate of *Rome*, *Excellentibus ingenis citius desuit ars qua civem regant, quam, qua hostem perdant*, (they were greater Masters in conquering their Enemies than governing their Citizens) let not those Scorpions (speaking of Common-wealth Protestants) be kept warm in our Bosoms till they sting us to Death; let not those who hate the Government, and would destroy the Government (I have not heard that they are changed since) let not them be sheltered under the Shadow and Protection of the Government. It is possible, and God knows it is but possible, that some men who are no Friends to this or that part of the Government (for you are not to believe, that they always discover what they are in truth most angry with) who would not buy these Alterations they most desire, at the price of a Civil War; they would bring it fairly about, wait for a godly Parliament, and do all by their Consent: (this is no Sham-Plot) Yet these Persons must not take it ill, that we cannot desire they should ever have it in their Power, to bring these Alterations to pass by those means they now seem to abhor. And I do heartily wish, I am sure they will not be the worse men nor the worse Subjects for it, that they would a little reflect upon what is past, remember how much they have once done (as they then pretended) more than they intended to have done, nay, which they did heartily abhor the thought of doing; and they will find, that the only way to preserve themselves innocent, is to keep their Minds from being vitiated by the first Impressions, by Jealousies, Murmurings, and Repinings; and above all, by the Conversations of those men who would sacrifice the Peace of the Kingdom to their own Ambition, Pride, (Revenge) or even to their Humour.

Thus far, he like an Oracle or a Prophet. If therefore you find any persons to whom this Character does agree, it is your Interest as well as your Duty, to deliberate long before you imbarque with such Persons, who, let their Pretences be never so fair and popular, yet fail by the Compass of Discontent or Revenge: and since this Lord has put you upon Reflection and Consideration, which are the Methods of Wisdom, let me offer some necessary Reflections
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and Considerations to your serious Thoughts, in which I appeal to the whole World, whether they are not wholesome Truths.

1. Reflect upon the end of things: That is the first thing to be considered by all those who pretend to be managed by Prudence; whether can these unlawful Arts of traducing and maligning the Government, lead us at the last, but to Seditions and Tumults, and the unpardonable Calamities of a Civil War? And what is to be got by that, but certain Slavery, if usurping Rebels should prevail? For such to secure that Tyranny which they have gotten by the Sword, must govern arbitrarily and by the Sword, as you have found by former deplorable Experience. Nor can any rational Person suppose, that they who will not be governed by the old and known Laws of the Land, will submit to any, when they are the Legislators by virtue of the longest Sword; and if Right should prevail, as 'tis odds but it will, not many Rebellions having been prosperous, consider how many Immunities, Charters, Grants, and Liberties, may be forfeited, which you now enjoy; and that though a gracious Oblivion may pardon Life, yet it will not be obliged to restore those Franchises which royal Bounty has conferr'd upon your Ancestors; and that Posterity may curse the Memory of those who gave the occasion of their Loss.

2. Reflect, how good, gracious, just and merciful a Prince you have, how happy you may live under his easy Government, how willing he is to comply with his people, in whatever is consistent with his Safety, Honour, Conscience, and his Coronation Oath; to desire more is not only ingratiously to disoblige him, but unreasonable, and which, no private person, not the meanest Subject, but would think it injurious to be imposed upon, in point of Honour or Conscience.

3. Reflect, especially such as have been guilty of the late Rebellion, how great an Arrear you are in the gracious Act of Oblivion; and if you have not made the Scores even betwixt God and you by true Repentance, how much you are run behind hand to the Avenger of innocent Blood, and do not by running further upon the Score, pull down divine Vengeance upon your Heads. There is a strange Fatality in the number Forty, *Forty years long was I grieved* (saith Almighty God) *with the wicked Generation of Murmurers and Rebels in the Wilderness, and at last, he swore they should not enter into his Rest.* Forty years passed over the wicked Jews, before the overflowing Flood of Vengeance overtook them for the innocent Blood of the Son of God, but then it came to purpose. It is now near forty years, since the late horrid and unnatural Rebellion began, wherein our Royal Sovereign was murdered by the barbarous hands of usurping Common-wealth Protestants; and let them look to it, and assure themselves, if they break out into Tumults, Sedition, or Rebellion, his prophetic Threatning will fall upon them. I believe (saith he, speaking of the Tumults) the just Avenger of all Disorders, will in time, make those men and that City, see their Sin in the Glass of their Punishment. 'Tis more than an even Lay, that they may one day see themselves punished by that way they offended; I pray God avert it, however, out of pure Compassion, I recommend it to your serious Consideration, and that though there is a future State wherein Punishment may be diffused as to private Persons, yet Communities and Bodies polittick being not capable of that, usually meet their Punishment in this World when they offend.

In short, permit me to tell you this home Truth, which you shall most certainly find justified by Experience. That you may run the same Circle of Misery (but do not make yourselves sure of Success, for you will be mistaken, let not him that putteth on his Harness, boast like him that putteth it off) you shall never see this Nation secured in a happy Peace, till sober, wise, judicious and moderate men, by moderate, cool, and healing Councils, rescue both the Church and State from the Attempts of Popery on the one hand, and the Invasions of Common-wealth Protestants, Schismatics, on the other, which however, some may look upon as impossible; yet there is a Power that is able to effect greater Wonders; and sure, none ought to be tempted to despair, who can remember his Majesties happy and miraculous Restauration, and how the Sword fell out of the hands of his Enemies: Remember this, and believe there is the same providence to protect him still, and to confound all the Attempts of his, and the Enemies of our Peace and Happiness.